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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/715,929	11/17/2000	Jeffrey P. Bezos	AMAZON.053A	6134

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EXAMINER

MEINECKE DIAZ, SUSANNA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

DATE MAILED: 07/23/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/715,929

Applicant(s)

BEZOS ET AL.

Examiner

Susanna M. Diaz

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 May 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-18, 20 and 21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 and 19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 November 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 05/27/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Non-Final Office action is responsive to Applicant's Election filed May 27, 2004.

Applicant has elected Group I, Species I (claims 1-11 and 19).

Claims 1-11 and 19 presented for examination.

Oath/Declaration

2. The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP §§ 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because:

Non-initialed and/or non-dated alterations have been made to the oath or declaration. See 37 CFR 1.52(c). Please see the non-initialed corrections of the Residence and Post Office Address for Warren Adams and the non-initialed correction of the Residence for Kenneth Dinovo.

It does not identify the complete mailing address of each inventor. A mailing address is an address at which an inventor customarily receives his or her mail and may be either a home or business address. The mailing address should include the ZIP Code designation. The mailing address may be provided in an application data sheet or a supplemental oath or declaration. See 37 CFR 1.63(c) and 37 CFR 1.76. Please note that the zip code for Jeffrey Bezos is not listed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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4. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 8 recites the limitation "the providing review" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. For examination purposes, "the providing review" has been interpreted as "the product review."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

6. Claims 1-7, 10, 11, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Epinions.com, as disclosed in "Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com" (July 12, 1999), "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions" (September 8, 1999), and Tedeschi, "Consumer Products are Being Reviewed on More Web Sites, Some Featuring Comments From Anyone With an Opinion" (October 25, 1999). Please note that the cited references provide evidence that Epinions.com was founded in April 1999, the features of Epinions.com were made public as early as July 12, 1999, and the actual web site was officially launched on September 8, 1999.

Epinions.com discloses a method of evaluating a product review displayed in connection with a networked commerce site, comprising:

[Claim 1] providing a product review authored by a first customer over a network to a plurality of other customers ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶ 2);

receiving votes over the network from other customers indicating whether the product review was helpful ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶¶ 4, 7; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4);

tallying the votes received for the product review ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

providing over the network an indication related to the vote tally for the product review in association with the product review ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

tallying votes received for a plurality or reviews authored by the first customer, the tally including votes received for the product review ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

assigning a designation to the first customer based on the vote tally for the plurality of reviews authored by the first customer ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7); and

displaying the designation in associated with the product review ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

[Claim 2] wherein the votes comprise votes indicating that the product review is helpful and votes indicating that the product review is not helpful ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7; Tedeschi: abstract);

[Claim 3] wherein the helpful votes are weighted differently than non-helpful vote ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7, 8 – Helpful votes are considered more positively than non-helpful votes, e.g., when ranking reviewers and compensating them accordingly);

[Claim 4] displaying a ranking in association with a plurality of the first customer's reviews, wherein the ranking is based at least in part on the vote tally ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces

the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7; Tedeschi: abstract);

[Claim 5] wherein the ranking is determined by the number of helpful and unhelpful votes received for one or more of the first customer's reviews ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7; Tedeschi: abstract);

[Claim 6] rewarding the first customer at least partly in response to the first customer achieving a first ranking ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

[Claim 7] displaying the designation in association with a plurality of reviews authored by the first customer ("Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com": ¶ 4; "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 2, 4, 7);

[Claim 10] generating a profile page associated with the first customer, wherein the profile page includes an indication related to the number of helpful votes the first customer has received for a plurality of reviews authored by the customer ("Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 4, 7);

[Claim 11] generating a profile page associated with the first customer, wherein the profile page includes the number of unhelpful votes the first customer has received

("Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶¶ 4, 7).

[Claim 19] Claim 19 recites limitations already addressed by the rejection of claim 1 above; therefore, the same rejection applies.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Epinions.com, as disclosed in "Home, Netscape, Yahoo! Veterans Announce Epinions.com" (July 12, 1999), "Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions" (September 8, 1999), and Tedeschi, "Consumer Products are Being Reviewed on More Web Sites, Some Featuring Comments From Anyone With an Opinion" (October 25, 1999), as applied to claim 1 above.

[Claim 8] Epinions.com tallies votes from other customers regarding a product review, thereby implying that Epinions.com's vote tallies are limited to those who did not author the original product review ("Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶ 2); however, Epinions.com

does not expressly teach that the first customer is actively prevented from voting on his/her own product review. Nevertheless, the Examiner asserts that Epinions.com would work against its own goal of providing consumers with unbiased opinions if it allowed first customers to rate their own product reviews. For example, Epinions.com touts that "consumers can rely on Epinions.com to offer brutally honest, relevant, and unbiased epinions. In order to maintain objectivity, Epinions.com does not create its own editorial content and the company does not sell products." ("Epinions.com Announces the Launch of its Free Online Shopping Guide Powered by Consumer Opinions": ¶ 2) Furthermore, Epinions.com monetarily compensates its more popular reviewers, as judged by ratings of the usefulness of the reviews; therefore, Epinions.com is clearly trying to encourage reviewers to submit reviews that are generally useful to the Epinions community as a whole and Epinions.com has a vested interest in doing so, especially since financial compensation is provided. Also, Official Notice is taken that it is old and well-known in the art of voting to prevent a subject of the vote from participating in the actual vote tally in order to prevent the subject of the vote from unfairly skewing the voting results in his/her favor. Epinions.com is concerned with promoting reviewers that truly meet the needs of the Epinions community as a whole; therefore, the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to adapt Epinions.com to prevent a vote on the product review from the first customer from being included in a tally of votes received for the product review in order to prevent the

first customer from unfairly skewing the voting results in his/her favor while ignoring the general consensus of the Epinions community as a whole.

[Claim 9] Epinions.com tallies votes from other customers regarding a product review; however, Epinions.com does not expressly teach that each of the other customers is prevented from voting more than once in relation to the product review. However, Official Notice is taken that it is old and well-known in the art of voting to only accept one vote from each eligible voter. This helps to ensure that each voter has no more and no less than his/her fair representation in the vote, thereby reducing the likelihood of skewing voting results in favor of the opinion of a single individual or limited group of individuals. Epinions.com promotes the formation of a community of trust in which reviewers whose opinions are more highly respected by a greater number of fellow community members are granted premier reviewer status; therefore, the Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to modify Epinions.com such that each of the other customers is prevented from voting more than once in relation to the product review in order to help ensure that each customer has no more and no less than his/her fair representation in the vote, thereby reducing the likelihood of skewing voting results in favor of the opinion of a single individual or limited group of individuals and increasing the likelihood of more accurately representing the opinions of the Epinions.com community as a whole.

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susanna M. Diaz whose telephone number is (703) 305-1337. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9 am - 5 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (703) 305-9643.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-1113.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

**Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450**

or faxed to:

(703)305-7687 [Official communications; including
After Final communications labeled
"Box AF"]

(703)746-7048 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled
"PROPOSED" or "DRAFT"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 22202, 7th floor receptionist.



Susanna M. Diaz
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3623
July 20, 2004